

Plants recorded in the Periwinkle Field at Penlanole in May - July 2009

Periwinkle Field

Dicotyledons

<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Daisy
<i>Cardamine pratensis</i>	Cuckooflower
<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	Common Knapweed
<i>Cerastium holostoides</i>	Common Mouse-ear
<i>Conopodium majus</i>	Pignut
<i>Crepis capillaris</i>	Smooth Hawk's-beard
<i>Euphrasia officinalis</i> agg.	Eyebright
<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	Hogweed
<i>Hieracium pilosella</i>	Mouse- ear Hawkweed
<i>Hypochoeris radicata</i>	Cat's-ear
<i>Leontodon autumnalis</i>	Autumn Hawkbit
<i>Leontodon hispidus</i>	Rough Hawkbit
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Common Bird's-foot-trefoil
<i>Myosotis arvensis</i>	Field Forget-me-not
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort Plantain
<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	Meadow Buttercup
<i>Ranunculus bulbosus</i>	Bulbous Buttercup
<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>	Yellow Rattle
<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	Common Sorrel
<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Broad-leaved Dock
<i>Stellaria graminea</i>	Lesser Stitchwort
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	Dandelion
<i>Trifolium dubium</i>	Lesser Trefoil
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Red Clover
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White Clover

Grasses

<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	Common Bent
<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>	Meadow Foxtail
<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	Sweet Vernal-grass
<i>Bromus hordeaceus</i>	Soft-brome
<i>Bromus lepidus</i>	Slender Soft-brome
<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>	Crested Dog's-tail
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Cock's-foot
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	Red Fescue
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire Fog
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial Rye-grass
<i>Phleum bertolonii</i>	Smaller Cat's-tail
<i>Phleum pratense</i>	Timothy
<i>Poa pratensis</i>	Smooth Meadow-grass
<i>Poa trivialis</i>	Rough Meadow-grass
<i>Trisetum flavescens</i>	Yellow Oat-grass
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Bracken
<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	Bluebell

Total of 40 species recorded plus one unidentified species of dicotyledon. (Bracken and Bluebell not included in the species total). This equals the 41 species recorded in 2008. Species diversity has been maintained.

Observations for 2009

The maintenance of species diversity is good.

Yellow Rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*) was abundant (dominant?) throughout the experimental area. Its role in suppressing grass growth may account for the maintenance of species diversity and the enormous increase in the abundance of dicotyledons, for example Hawk's-beard, Hawkweed, Hawkbit, Eyebright and Red Clover.

Eyebright (*Euphrasia officinalis* agg.) was more abundant than in previous years. There was one small area where it was dominant; this was in the area where badgers had grubbed up the grassland looking for leather jackets in 2007. Did this activity stimulate the germination of dormant seed? Eyebright is not one of the species recorded during the survey of Ty Brith from where the seed for sowing in 2007 was obtained.

The abundance of dicotyledonous flowers was much higher than in previous years. The experimental area looked very colourful and judging from the abundance of yellow-flowered species, there has been a spread of dicotyledonous species into the meadow east and west from the original central improved area.

These observations are not based on quantified data.

Insects recorded

Honey bees and at least three species of bumble bees were abundant. Butterflies recorded were Meadow brown, Ringlet, Large White and Painted Lady.

After the very wet summers of 2007 and 2008 and the current wet conditions, this abundance of insects is encouraging.

Grazing Pressure

Since the hay cutting in 2008, six lambs were grazed on the field for a few weeks until September. In March/April 36 ewes and lambs were grazed on the field. Grazing ceased in the third week of April in compliance with the regulations of the ESA agreement.

This amount of grazing pressure was excellent for achieving a high diversity of dicotyledonous species. This is in contrast to the nil grazing which took place during the winter of 2006/2007

Winter grazing is essential to maintain species diversity

References

Stace.Clive (1977) New Flora of the British Isles.CUP

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